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ABSTRACT

Linguistic history has described borrowing in the European languages as a process exclusive to one language at any given time. However, it is more likely that there is a core of common loan words, or internationalisms, in many European languages. These internationalisms have come from a variety of sources: the historic interrelatedness of Indo-European languages, mutual borrowing, borrowing from non-European languages, linguistic conventions in supra-national institutions such as the church, scientific and technological standardization, and international news exchange. Using German, French, and English as examples, identical vocabularies can be found in three areas: everyday interaction containing words for commonly used objects; utility words or the core vocabularies of conceptual and specialized areas; and languages for special purposes. Although European languages have moved continuously away from the common languages of their origin, the inventory of internationalisms reveals a tendency toward linguistic convergence. These identical or similar vocabularies can be exploited to facilitate everyday communication between language communities, enhance foreign language teaching and learning, help one learn more about historical and cultural contacts between European peoples, describe a pan-European culture, and add to the discussion of linguistic borrowing. (MSE)

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Internationalisms - Identical Vocabularies in European Languages

Peter Braun

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The present study is a contribution towards the clarification of European language questions. Its aim is to resolve certain international language problems with the help of a reorientation in the perception and exploitation of the existing language situation. It focuses upon the loan vocabularies of several European languages to whose international status (and possible utility) only little attention has been paid up to the present. K. Korn(1978) took up this widely neglected topic in a leader in the FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG and pointed out the necessity of further discussion. Korn views the linguistic future of Europe as being closely related to the recognition and utilization of the existing European languages. "The European languages are no obstacle standing in the way of European unity, rather they are the pan-European element."

This study starts out with the assumption that this pan-European element is to be found in the identical (or similar) vocabularies of the national languages and that it is in need of linguistic investigation and of exploitation in language teaching. In the following argumentation German, English and French are taken as examples.

A reorientation in the assessment of loan vocabularies is a logical consequence of an awareness of the political situation. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were the era of the establishment of nation states and hence, simultaneously, of the establishment of national languages. It is easy to understand why the creation of nation states brought with it an emphasis on the idiosyncratic features of each national language, especially in view of the delayed

development of a unified German language. In spite of obvious differences in the cohesion of European states(Yugoslavia, Belgium), 20th century Europe exhibits relatively stable linguistic conditions. G. Décsy, for example, comes to a largely positive conclusion with regard to Europe as a whole(Décsy 1973, 176ff.): "Within the European state system, some 561 million members of the total population(88%) live in countries whose official language is their own, while 57 million(about 9%) are residents of countries whose official language is not their own." In view of such positive findings, it is no longer possible to belabour twentieth century questions with nineteenth century answers. At the end of the twentieth century, many other problems and tasks are being approached in an international fashion. Since governments and official bodies have been trying for decades to achieve international agreement, these political efforts ought to have an effect on the treatment of national and internatinal linguistic problems. Hence the question of the future of language now falls within the scope of linguistics. As is well-known, the linguistic past has been abundantly dealt with since the nineteenth century.

If we accept this historical perspective, then it becomes clear that the various epochs of linguistic borrowing have been described very one-sidedly from the point of view of individual national languages only. It has been overlooked that the major processes of borrowing can only be understood as European linguistic movements. This holds for the Latin Middle Ages, for the concept of education during the Humanistic period(classical Latin and Greek), for cultural exchange during the seventeeth and eighteenth centuries and for the period after 1945(English). As yet, linguistic histories have described these European

processes of borrowing almost exclusively as events limited to one language. As an expression of concern for a national language, this attitude is understandable. With respect to common European aims, however, it is politically and linguistically dubious and clearly in need of revision.

Many European languages - and not only these - possess considerable inventories of loan words. These inventories are not the result of chance but of international contacts with other political, cultural and economic circumstances. From the view-point of a single language, they can be regarded as being a source of difficulty or a nuisance. A contrastive approach, however, reveals many linguistic enclaves with supra-national common elements. These linguistic elements common to the vocabularies of several languages are subsumed under the concept of internationalism. Many reasons can be found for the development of internationalisms in German, English and French, among which are:

- the relatedness of the Indo-European languages;
- mutual borrowing or borrowing from other European languages;
- borrowing from non-European languages;
- linguistic conventions in supra-national institutions (e.g. the Church, official organizations);
- linguistic standardization in the international languages of science and technology;
- exchange of information by international news agencies.

Before discussing the notion of internationalisms and the inventories of individual languages, consider some examples for illustration.

Sports(German - English - French): Baseball - baseball base-ball, Basketball - basketball - basket-ball, Boxen - boxing - boxe, Derby - Derby - derby, Golf - golf - golf.

Musical instruments: Akkordeon - accordion - accordéon, Balalaika - balalaika - balalaïka, Flöte - flute - flûte, Gitarre - guitar - guitare, Gong - gong - gong.
Flowers: Anemone - anemone - anémone, Aster - aster - aster, Dahlie - dahlia - dahlia, Edelweiß - edelweiss - edelweiss.
Antonyms: abstrakt - abstract - abstrait, konkret - concrete - concret; aktiv - active - actif, passiv - passive - passif; defensiv - defensive - défensif, offensiv - offensive - offensif; konkav - concave - concave, konvex - convex - convexe; exportieren - export - exporter, importieren - import - importer; Altruismus - altruism - altruisme, Egoismus - egoism - egoisme.
Proper names as names of objects: Atlas - atlas - atlas, Boycott - boycott - boycottage, Celsius - Celsius - Celsius, Colt - colt - colt, Browning - Browning - Browning.
Technology: Caravan - caravan - caravane, Chassis - chassis - châssis, Cockpit - cockpit - cockpit, Dynamo - dynamo - dynamo, Generator - generator - générateur.

It would appear that linguistics and especially loan-word research have placed too little emphasis on the concept of internationalisms. For this reason, the international vocabularies have hardly been given any attention and have not been recorded as components of the lexicon. Some compilers of dictionaries of linguistics even appear to be unacquainted with the term or to regard it as unimportant. The extant definitions range from W. Ulrich's sober "Word, used in many national languages, current internationally, comprehensible without translation"(Ulrich ^{2}1975, 63) to M.Wandruszka's philosophical interpretation(Wandruszka ^{2}1976, 8): "Our languages are not monosystems. Every language is a conglomerate of languages; every language is a polysystem. We are already multilingual in our own mother tongue."

The extent of internationalization becomes clear if a comparative analysis of dictionaries is undertaken. After many years of analysing dictionaries, I arrived at an initial inventory of identical vocabularies in the German, English and French languages. According to my analysis of one-volume school dictionaries, the identical vocabularies encompass 3500 words. Words from different languages are regarded as identical or similar if they show a high degree of agreement in spelling and meaning. Small graphemic deviations(such as Tee, tea, thé; Oase, oasis, oasis) were disregarded, as were minor variations in word formation(as in exportieren, export, exporter; Qualität, quality, qualité). Decisive for their inclusion was the ability of a speaker/reader to recognize these words as identical linguistic signs in the three languages in question.

Pronunciation (phonetics) was completely excluded. It is within the area of pronunciation that many languages have most clearly moved away from each other. The phonetic nature of different languages often helps to conceal identical or similar features and to emphasise dissimilarities.

The total area of identical vocabularies can be roughly divided into three areas of use: 1. Everyday interaction containing words for commonly used objects(e.g. ball, banana, telephone); 2. utility words(J.A. Pfeffer 1975:12), which can be regarded as the core vocabularies of important conceptual and specialized areas(e.g. fiord, service(in tennis)). These words are statistically not very important but are essential to denote important concepts in various referential areas; 3. languages for special purposes. This area can be divided into the three sub-areas of scientific language, workshop language or occupational dialects and consumer or sales language. Words in scientific language(falsification, sedative, vector) frequently possess only a limited distribution and,

for most non-specialists, are limited to the passive vocabulary. Knowledge of the various languages of science is, however, highly variable: the specialized vocabularies of technology, literary studies and even medicine have up to now been more frequently popularized than those of chemistry or computer science. This is, however, only true for certain sub-vocabularies of these disciplines. The third area of usage largely embraces the university disciplines and specialized training, while the second is mainly covered by school subjects. More exact delimitations are not at present possible, especially as many of these words occur in several areas.

As the word lists show, most internationalisms do not occur in isolation but in semantically related groups. More than 75% of the internationalisms recorded can be arranged in conceptually or semantically related domains. By far the largest proportion of the vocabularies covers the domains of everyday life and school subjects, which means that about 2700 of the internationalisms given in school dictionaries can be regarded as elements of the standard language.

Sufficient information on the age of the loan words is provided in the word histories of Maurer/Stroh(^{2}1959), Tschirch(1969) and von Polenz(1972). As regards the time of borrowing, we can say with certainty that most of the internationalsms listed in school dictionaries were borrowed before 1945. Many of these words occur not only in present-day German, English and French but also belong to the standard vocabularies of other European languages and form a nucleus for increasing internationalization. Here some examples(German - English - French - Italian - Spanish - Russian):

Flamme - flame - flamme - fiamma - llama - пла́мя,
Form - form - forme - forma - forma - фо́рма,
Photo - photo - photo - foto - foto - фо́то,
photographieren - photograph - photographier - fotografare - fotografiar - фотографи́ровать.

Every year, new internationalisms are added, especially from the various languages of special purposes, since many of these languages are designed from the outset to be international. The tendency towards increasing internationalization can be seen in the fact that the more recent borrowings are not assimilated or integrated to the same extent as earlier ones(e.g. Engl. strike/ Germ. Streik). The retention of foreign sounds and forms can above all be ascribed to extra-linguistic factors. More than 50% of Germans state that they know a foreign language. This percentage is even higher for the young generation.

Although the European languages have - from the genetic point of view - moved further and further away from the common languages of their origin, the inventories of internationalisms reveal tendencies towards mutual convergence, especially within the area of vocabulary. G. Korlén (1969) characterizes this internationalization of vocabulary as "a development within the German language which has European or, more correctly, world-wide features". And B. Müller, describing the effects of the intermingling of different languages in present-day French, emphasizes two aspects of this phenomenon(1975:50): "The tribute which each individual language must pay to the present represents the loss of a piece of individuality; the benefit gained is a mutuality over and above the individual language which is beginning to make the ancient myth of the one language of mankind a reality."

The historical, economic and cultural reasons for linguistic borrowing were mentioned above. These extra-linguistic reasons remain without doubt the most important factors and are part and parcel of any discussion of loan words. There must, however, be other reasons for the fact that French and English loan words were accepted into many European languages. Extra-linguistic reasons alone provide no satisfactory explanation of the fact that loan words from French and English are so dispro-

portionately represented in European dictionaries. If we take extra-lingustic factors such as history, culture, the history of ideas, as a yardstick, then the German language appears to be underrepresented. There is another assumption which does not seem to hold water: Geographically, the German-speaking area is favourably situated, having 4850 kilometers of borders where language contact is possible, and is in close proximity to fourteen other languages. Borders and proximity are synonymous with the possibility of influencing and being influenced. France and Great Britain, by contrast, are in this respect in a geographically unfavourable position. Too little attention has been paid to the favourable morphological structure of the vocabularies of French and English, especially those features and relations determined by the hybrid nature of these languages. Such a point of view makes it necessary to include the particular characteristics of the donor languages in the discussion. With reference to the varying degrees of "hybridization", G. Décsy(1973: 184f.) refers to "hybrid languages", "neutral languages" and "introverted languages". In hybrid languages(English, French, Rumanian), "the foreign component is present to a high degree". In introverted languages(Icelandic, Finnish, German), "the foreign component does not attain the usual degree. The language constructs expressions for new concepts from its own resources." The integration of Latin and Greek vocabularies and word formation elements is usually related to the degree of hybridization of various languages. To varying degrees, the Latin vocabulary has corresponding forms in many European languages, not least because of the borrowings from English and French. It is certainly more than a pun when the Swedish Germanist A. Lindkvist(1969, 8) speaks of a linguistic development "sub specie Latinitatis". Korlén 's interpretation goes even

further(1969,9): "Seen from this perspective, the internal semantic structure of most European languages is indeed so similar that one is justified in speaking of an occidental linguistic convergence and levelling." This phenomenon was reinforced by the teaching of Latin in schools throughout Europe. Unfortunately, linguistic comparison and borrowing processes were neglected in Latin teaching. The study of Latin literature and of the monosystemic elements of grammar left little room for other aims.

French and English have become the greatest donor languages in recent European linguistic history because both these languages have integrated and activated the Latin vocabulary to a relatively great extent. For English, a West Germanic language, the percentage of direct borrowings from Latin is given as 22% to 28%, according to the dictionary consulted; in the case of borrowings from French, the percentage varies between 28% and 38%, giving a total Latin-Romance vocabulary of between 50 % and 60%(H. Scheler 1977: 35ff., 52ff.).

It is not surprising that a direct comparison of English and French dictionaries reveals more common features than a comparison of English and German dictionaries. This means that every page of an English or French dictionary contains internationalisms which are not present in German, e.g. English: face, faculty, fatigue, facility; French: face, faculté, fatigue, facilité; German: Gesicht, Fähigkeit, Ermüdung, Leichtigkeit. Many of these common English-French features are also to be found in other Romance areas, e.g. Italian: faccia, facoltá, fatica, facilitá; Spanish: faz, facultad, fatiga, facilidad.

The vocabulary of German differs in several respects from that of other European languages. Due to a process of Germanizing loan words, which began in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and which has continued up to

the present, many essential elements of common European culture contained in the vocabulary have been lost. Purists such as Schottel, Harsdörffer and von Zesen(all in the seventeenth century) and especially Campe(d. 1818) tried to eradicate as many loan words as possible by creating equivalent German words. Viewed from the present, one has to conclude that this procedure was only partly successful, since, in many cases, the loan words continued to exist side-by-side with the Germanized words. Although this was not their intention, the purists contributed to an increase of synonyms in German. To give a few examples: Moment/Augenblick, Autor/Verfasser, Dialekt/Mundart, Lexikon/Wörterbuch, Tragödie/Trauerspiel, Universität/Hochschule. Many Germanized forms differ from their models in meaning or connotation. Some examples are: Grammatik/Sprachlehre, Melancholie/Trübsinn, Karikatur/Zerrbild. Fortunately, not all attempts of Germanization were successful, since in many cases, their pedantic exactitude becomes laughable, for example, those of Campe(K. Daniels, 1959, 1979): Poren/Schweißlöcher, Pause/Zwischenstille, Dame/Ehrenfrau, marschieren/schrittlingsgehen, fanatisch/rasegläubig.

The above comments should not lead to rash conclusions. There are, of course, many internationalisms in the German vocabulary and it can equally well be shown that there are common German-English and German-French features which are not found in the other languages. However, internationalisms probably play a more important role in other European languages than they do in German. Another difference is the fact that they are not very highly thought of in German and are preserved in an institution which does not exist in most language communities: the foreign-word dictionary("Fremdwörterbuch"). Unfortunately, we have to repeat here what P. von Polenz

stated in 1967 in a very influential essay(1967, 1979:18): "Germany is the land of foreign-word dictionaries, not because there are more of these words in German than in other modern European languages but because it has long been practice to banish to these dictionaries those words which, in other countries, have been listed as loan words in normal dictionaries or recorded with other 'difficult words' in dictionaries of specialized terminology."
It is particularly reprehensible that the compilers of these dictionaries(contrary to the present state of lingustic knowledge) still base their decision as to whether a word is a 'foreign word' or not on its historical origin and not on its currency in the present-day language. Hence, the following current and generally known words are still listed in the foreign-word dictionary published by Duden(fourth edition 1982!): Balkon, Ball, Banane, Fabrik, Familie, Fanfare, Fasan, Ferien. Here one can only quote the "imprisoned words" themselves: the situation is "fatal", "fanatical", or, less seriously, a "farce".
An unusual example of a recently coined linguistically nationalistic word is "Fernsehen"(television), which was formed by analogy with the not very successful term "Fernsprechen"(telephone) and which is used only in German, Danish(fjernsyn) and Norwegian(fjernsyn). Most European languages use the Greco-Latin internationalism 'television': television(English), televisie(Dutch), television(Swedish), télévision(French), televisione(Italian), televisión (Spanish), televisão(Portuguese), телевидение (Russian), telewizja(Polish), televize(Czechoslovakian), televizija (Serbocroatian), televisio(Finnish), televizió(Hungarian), televizyon(Turkish). Non-European languages, too, have adopted the European name with the new technology, for example, Arabic, Malay, Japanese and Korean.
The Russian loan word is not a unique case. We know too little in the West today of how receptive Russian was

to loan words in many phases of its development. Dëcsy's comparative study provides us with important insights (1973:40ff.): "Linguists are agreed that Russian is the most cosmopolitan of the Slavic languages - without a trace of xenophobia. It has always accepted foreign lingustic material willingly and abundantly. It was therefore rightly considered to be a hybrid language - a criterion that appears to be characteristic of most successful world languages." To gain an impression of the numerous, still current internationalisms, one only has to leaf through a small Russian dictionary, e.g. under the letter F(ф): fabrika, fakt, fakul'tet, familija, fantasija, fassad, and many others.

To conclude, I would like to offer the following hypotheses concerning possibilities of taking advantage of international vocabularies. Identical(or similar) vocabularies:

- can facilitate everyday communication between members of different language communities;
- have a multitude of applications in foreign language acquisition and teaching;
- yield information on the historical and cultural contacts between different peoples;
- can be interpreted as the vocabularies of a pan-European culture;
- make an important contribution towards a differentiation of the discussion on foreign borrowings.

The first two hypotheses deserve far more attention than they have previously been given. It would appear that in foreign language teaching the differences between the languages in contact are strongly emphasized and their identical or similar features are almost totally ignored. Apparently people have been too readily influenced by the results of research on linguistic interference, according to which structural elements from the first language can have a detrimental influence on the perception and realization of the second language. No matter how important the results of research on interference are, they can occasionally distort one's view of the possibilities for

facilitating learning. R. Lado(1972:17), referring to the aims and achievements of contrastive linguistics, speaks of obstructing and facilitating learning. E. Coseriu(1972:45] asks whether contrastive linguistics has not placed too much amphasis on the contrasting and too little on the non-contrasting elements of individual languages.

A final comment remains to be made. The comparison of only two languages reveals far more extensive identical inventories but does not enable us to decide whether identical lexemes are also internationalisms, that is, whether they occur in more than two languages. In a project at the University of Essen(Braun, Kamphausen, Schönbeck), German and English school dictionaries were examined for identical vocabularies and an inventory of no less than 8000 identical or similar words was found(P. Braun, 1979).

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